

# WHITEPAPER

## **Living Case Stories** *and How to Keep Your Webinar Attendees from Bailing*

Based on the WebAttract thought leadership webinar  
January 20, 2010

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# INTRODUCTION

## Living Case Stories

Think about it....in the B2B world, the primary reason for someone to register and attend your webinar is to learn something valuable and new or to validate current assumptions.

In the past, a good method for achieving the dissemination of information was from using a Case Study. But, if you really want to engage your audience and create an impactful and memorable webinar, consider developing what we refer to as a Living Case Story to be at the heart of your webinar.

After all, if it was just a presentation of facts, we wouldn't need to take up folks time and have them register and attend a webinar. We could just email them a whitepaper or presentation.

As you'll see, a Living Case Story is a presentation of more than facts, especially if it is delivered by someone who has both lived through solving a vexing business or technical challenge and can share their passion around the results achieved or lessons learned.

Creating an impactful and "living" case story requires an understanding of these elements:

1. What new information will the audience learn from your Living Case Story?
2. Where do you begin and how do you assemble all of the moving parts to a webinar Living Case Story?
3. What are some ways for packaging and presenting content to engage your audience?

In this whitepaper, we will explore how a Living Case Story adds value to your webinars, what are the building blocks of a Living Case Story and then illustrate the successful telling of a Living Case Story by using an actual webinar example of Underwriters Laboratories, a well known global leader in product safety, standards development, testing and certification.

# HOW THE LIVING CASE STORY ADDS VALUE TO YOUR WEBINAR

- Allows you to demonstrate your thought leadership in solving a key business or technical challenge for a client
- Secures greater brand equity and trust for your firm, allowing you to extend the dialogue post webinar
- Creates fresh new sales leads opportunities without subjecting attendees to a nakedly commercial pitch

# WHAT IT IS ... AND WHAT IT ISN'T

## A LIVING CASE STORY STIMULATES YOUR INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY TO LEARN MORE

When you go to the movies or rent a DVD, before the main attraction comes on, there's usually a series of trailers or previews to watch. The purpose of these trailers is to get you interested enough to want to "pay" and see the full production.

When you do a webinar, you are, in a sense, providing your audience with a "preview" of a success story that will demonstrate how you could help them with a similar business or technology challenge.

Done right, with The Living Case Story as your centerpiece, you can stimulate their intellectual curiosity to "want to learn more" about how you can help them.

A credible presentation helps you rise above the noise and extend the conversation post webinar. This is your opportunity to have a one on one dialogue which determines if developing a business relationship makes sense.

Furthermore, the post webinar conversation allows you to learn more about their needs, and if they are interested, then you can show them more of your "movie" which could consist of a demo, a whitepaper or formal case study.

# THE BUILDING BLOCKS OF A LIVING CASE STORY FRAMEWORK



**THE  
AUDIENCE**



**YOUR  
MESSAGE**



**KEY  
ELEMENTS**

# THE AUDIENCE

## YOUR AUDIENCE IS YOUR TOP PRIORITY

- What do you know about them?
- What topic will your audience find most engaging?
- What will they get out of investing their time with you?



### Best Practice Tip

**On the registration page, ask “What do you want to learn from this webinar?”**

# THE AUDIENCE

## YOUR AUDIENCE IS YOUR TOP PRIORITY

We're sure we all agree that regardless of whether you're producing a theatrical event, a podcast or an informational webinar, the audience has got to be your top priority.

So before we start planning an event, we ask ourselves the following questions:

...What do we know about them? Where are they from, what industries do they represent, and what are their job functions?

With that information in-hand...

...what topics will our audience find most engaging? Clearly, this is not a decision we make without the advice and counsel of those whose opinions we rely on, but for instance... would the audience be more interested in a discussion of best practices? ...or an exploration of a topical concern around something like regulatory compliance? ...or a presentation of a case study where a useful new technology or process is demonstrated...

And then a very important question:...

...What will we provide so the audience is certain they invested their time well with us?...for instance, shall we provide insights, best practices, tips and tricks, metrics, explanations of ROI, an interview with a subject matter expert....

And then lastly...

...How do we assure they can extend the dialogue with us following the event?...

...What we mean by this is not simply providing an email address and phone number for ourselves on the last slide, but also for the featured speakers, and links to presented collateral and to your webinar archive where they can obtain recorded copies. AND, we also expect to interact with the audience after the event...not just a "thanks for registering" email, but one that provides links to other related collateral as well as offers a poll so the audience can provide additional feedback.

# YOUR MESSAGE

## INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE

- What do you want to tell them?
- Why should they care?
- What post webinar actions do you want them to take?
- Is it credible, authentic and natural?



# YOUR MESSAGE

## INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE

It's important that you "connect" with your audience in such a way that they hear you. Remember, don't sell or hype, but certainly share your enthusiasm. If you're not excited about your topic, how can you expect your audience to be?

To further ensure that you connect with your audience, now is the time to revisit the invitation that was sent out, and begin to identify three key items:

1. What did you promise the webinar would deliver?
2. How will you translate these deliverables into a compelling message?
3. Will the presenter or presentation style you choose be able to support and reinforce the message to sound believable and authentic?

An important point to remember is that your invitation strategy is used to both invite people to register for your webinar, and during the live event the invitation message is used to create a compelling story that will motivate your audience to want to learn more from you. If your content and messaging fall short of the audience's expectations, it will cause your audience to feel less interested in what you have to say, and they may even bail early in the webinar.

Project your points with enthusiasm in the following context:

- Articulate concisely and directly what you want to tell them.
- Think about why they should care or what's in it for them.
- What do you want them to do with this information?

And remember, in a webinar you can't see your audience, so you must maximize the use of your voice to guide your listeners in order to ensure they "hear" you. Sounds simple, but this is one of the most important elements overlooked during most presentations. It's your chance to inspire and motivate them to want to learn more and have a discussion post webinar.

# STORY DELIVERY METHODS TO ENGAGE YOUR AUDIENCE

## IS FLOW INTERESTING, RELEVANT AND ENGAGING?

There are various communication styles which can be used to engage your audience so the flow is interesting, relevant and engaging. Creating a dialogue with the audience, as opposed to a monologue, means having two or more credible speakers interacting in order to keep the audience's attention.

Here's three Living Case Story delivery methods which can be quite effective:

- **An Interview:** Can really be beneficial as it provides a way to moderate and tell a story. Works well when there is a lot of detail. Having a dialogue between two people helps keep the message on track.
- **A Panel:** Can be very effective IF there's sufficient time to rehearse with all panelists. A sufficient amount of rehearsal time would be at least three times before going live so panelists can become familiar with each other's style and flow. Without sufficient practice, the panel discussion often can become lopsided with one panelist dominating the rest, which can produce less than stellar results.
- **A Day In The Life:** A very effective approach. We have a client called Chrometa which provides attorneys with a software to automatically capture their billable time by client and matter. All attorneys know this is a pain point, so we didn't need to take up their time to tell them what they already know, so what we did was get a practicing attorney who uses this software to present a day in the life and run the audience through three cases or scenarios. Leveraging the credentials of one of their peers worked very nicely to show them how he used it to do a better job of capturing time that could have potentially been lost.

An important consideration is to align the message and content to the presenter's style. It takes time to develop a presentation, and one of the challenges is realizing most webinar presenters vary in skill and communication ability. Also, keep in mind that your presenters usually have a "day job" which will always take precedence to the webinar.

# KEY ELEMENTS OF A LIVING CASE STORY

- Case Story Company Profile
- Challenges Defined
- Options Considered
- Solution Executed
- Results - Metrics
- Best Practices
- Lessons Learned
- How to Get Started



# Living Case Story Highlights



**Underwriters  
Laboratories**

**This Living Case Story was done for a division of Underwriters Laboratories in November 2009. Founded in 1894, Underwriters Laboratories Inc (UL) is truly an icon, having earned a reputation as a global leader in product safety standards development, testing and certification.**



# Messaging Challenges Defined



**Underwriters  
Laboratories**

The audience UL wanted to reach consisted of U.S. plastics engineers. They had a twin goal of driving demand for their new Thermoplastics Testing Center and promoting their thought leadership to become a partner with clients. The goal was to show how they could get clients to market faster and with less product development risk and costs.

UL presented us with an interesting challenge, and in the successive pages we'll illustrate some of the steps of how we collaborated with them to develop a Living Case Story that held their audience's attention, got 70% of the audience to accept a "call to action" on the spot by signing up for the next UL webinar event, provided a real boost to UL's thought leadership and extended their dialogue with key prospects and clients.

# The Invitation is Representative of the Message

 **the standard in safety**

**Underwriters Laboratories**

*We've not yet heard from you, [\[\[first\\_name\]\]](#), and want to assure you have every opportunity to register for this valuable, informative and complimentary event.*



Next week, on Tuesday, November 17th, our panel of subject matter experts will explore with you the testing of thin samples and the capabilities of Underwriters Laboratories' (UL) Thermoplastics Testing Center (TTC) to help meet design benchmarks and go-to-market product roadmaps.

Please join us for a 1-hour complimentary presentation centered on an important case study with UL client, PolyOne. You'll hear how working with UL in the early stages of product development and testing helped facilitate an ontime product launch and how collaborating with UL early in the material selection process enabled more efficient product certification. With featured panelists:



George Fedtramm, PE, UL Corporate Fellow and Principal Engineer



Berd Winkelmann, Deputy Director of UL's Thermoplastics Testing Center (TTC), and



Steve Paolucci, Product Development Scientist at PolyOne

George, Berd and Steve will also discuss issues surrounding material pre-selection and sample production, specifically as it relates to making plastics thinner and lighter to lower production costs. You'll have the opportunity to participate in polls with your peers, and to participate in an interactive Q&A session with our panel.

Register today for this valuable and complimentary opportunity!

This is a valuable commercial communication. If you'd like to receive no further communications, please click [here](#). If this link does not function in your email client, please reply with "Unlink" in the subject line.

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2601 NW Lake Rd., Cary, NC 27513-8542



**Webinar Details**

**When:**  
Tuesday,  
November 17, 2009  
2 to 3 pm EST  
1 to 2 pm CST  
Noon to 1 pm MST  
11 am to Noon PST

**Hosted By:**  
Underwriters  
Laboratories

**Moderated By:**  
Mike Agron,  
Executive Webinar  
Producer

**Case Study By:**  
Steve Paolucci,  
Product Development  
Scientist, PolyOne

# Developing a Living Case Story



**Underwriters  
Laboratories**

We collectively determined that leveraging UL's recent success with one of their clients would be a perfect Living Case Story.

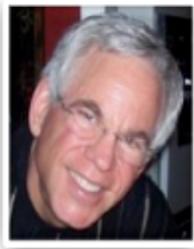
We found that the UL client was willing to discuss his experiences and success in how they collaborated with UL to not only get to market faster but beat out their competition and avoid costly R&D expenses. The UL client was further able to share his experiences to create a very credible and authentic Living Case Story. His credibility, enthusiasm and likability were critical factors in him being able to connect with the audience and hold their interest.

Next, we determined that the best presentation style would be to have our moderator interview him by asking questions around the client's challenges, solution options, results, best practices, lessons learned and how to get started. This made the flow engaging and the use of real life examples kept it relevant.

# LIVING CASE STORY – CLOSING THOUGHTS

## THOUGHT LEADERSHIP - BRAND AWARENESS - SALES LEADS

- Does the Living Case Story add value to your webinar?
- Does the webinar content support the invitation messaging?
- Is the webinar content flow natural, interesting, relevant and engaging?
- Will your Living Case Story keep your attendees from bailing?



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